THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) The year-wise expenditure incurred to keep National Highway-55 traffic worthy since 1995-96 is as under:

Year	Amount in lakhs
1995-96	Rs. 153.879
1996-97	Rs. 155.492
1997-98	Rs. 183.612

(b) and (c) The money is allocated for the maintenance of all National Highways in a State and not National Highway wise. However, Public Works Department of Government of West Bengal, who are responsible for maintaining this National Highway on behalf of this Ministry on agency basis, have reported that for the year 1998-99 (upto October, 1998) an expenditure of Rs. 147.278 lakhs have been incurred for this purpose.

Financial assistance to textile industry in Kerala

1848. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the acute crisis currently being faced by the textile industry in Kerala posing a serious threat to the huge investments made in the industry both by the State Government and the private sector and endangering the employment of about 25,000 personnel including workers, trainees etc. in both the sectors;

(b) whether the State Government has suggested some relief measures and necessary financial assistance for rejuvenating the textile industry in the State; and

(c) if so, the details of these suggestions and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) Hon'ble Minister for Industries and Social Welfare, State Government of Kerala, in a letter, *inter-alia*, has stated that acute crisis in textile industry has posed a serious threat to huge investment made in the industry both by the State Government and the private sector. This situation has endangered the employment of around 19,000 personnel directly engaged by the textile mills in the State besides that of an equal number of indirect labour.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Hon'ble Minister for Industries and Social Welfare, State Government of Kerala has requested assistance in respect of following items for rejuvendating the textile industry in Kerala—

(i) Reintroduction of granting interest free excise loan to sick units.

(ii) Availability of credit at lower rate of interest at peak season.

(iii) Rephasement of dues against long term loans:—To allow moratorium against repayment of term loans to deserving mills.

(iv) Ensuring availability of quality cotton at fair prices.

(v) Reduction in Hank Yarn Obligation.

(vi) Extension of Technology Upgradation Fund to Spinning Mills.

(vii) Extension of NRF to State Public Section Units.

Items (i), (ii) & (iii) have been taken up with Ministry of Finance which are concerned with them. In addition, Ministry of Textiles has convened a series of meetings (including one chaired by Textile Minister) with representatives of banks and financial institutions and those of industry for discussing the problem of adequate availability of credit to textile sector. Banks and financial institutions have indicated extension of a helpful hand to the industry. Minister of State (*Revenue, Banking & Insurance*) also met the representatives of textile associations and representatives of banks and financial institutions to consider the working capital requirements of textile industry.

As regards (iv), Government does not Intervene in cotton market unless the prices of raw cotton fall below the minimum support price.

As regards (v), Government have discontinued the linkage of cotton yarn exports and fulfilment of Hank Yarn Obligation for yarn sold in the domestic tariff area.

As regard (vi) formal decision to the Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme is yet to be received, although beneficiary sectors have been identified and the guidelines for implementing the scheme would be worked out immediately after receipt of the decision.

As regards (vii), the matter has been taken up with Ministry of Industry as they are concerned with it.

Production and Export of Textile Items

1849. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 301 given in the Rajya Sabha on 1st December, 1998 and state:

(a) the total production of textiles and garments in the country; and

(b) the actual exports of textile items during 1998-99 till date?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) and (b) The production and export figures of textile items are given below:

Production of Textile items	1997-98
Spun Yarn (including SSI Units)	2973.00 Mn. Kg.
Fabric (including Khadi, Wool & Silk)	37346.00 Mn.Sq.Mtrs.
Man-made Fibre/ Filament Yarn	1476969.00 tonnes

Textile Exports (worth)	1997-98
	10334.74 Mn. US $
	7037.10 Mn. US $ (April-Oct., 1998)

Revival Package For NTC MILLS

1850. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) When Government propose to implement the agreement made with Central Trade Unions on revival of 123 sick textile mills.

(b) whether Government have evolved any other revival package for the NTC mills; and

(c) whether Government would honour the agreement signed with the Central Trade Unions in 1995?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) to (c) The Textile Research Associations had prepared a plan for modernisation of 79 mills of NTC at an investment of Rs. 2005.72 crores. The modernisation plan, inter-alia, envisaged restructuring of 36 unviable mills into 18 viable mills. The Labour Ministry's Special Tripartite Committee on the NTC had recommended on 9.4.94 that NTC mills as well as its taken over mills (since nationalised) could be made viable by modernisation as proposed by the Textile Research Associations.

A Turn Around Strategy for NTC Mills was approved by Government in 1995. The plan was to be implemented through generation of funds from the sale of surplus land/assets of NTC. Major portion of this land is located in Mumbai. The approval of State Government of Maharashtra for sale of land is still awaited. Moreover, in case of four subsidiaries of NTC *viz* NTC (MP), NTC (Guj), NTC (WBAB&O) and NTC(UP),